

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: My property is in the City; do I get my permit from your office?

A: No, Frederick City has its own Permits and Inspections Department, located at 140 West Patrick Street.

Q: Can I use a credit card or debit card to pay for my permit application?

A: No.

Q: How long will I have to wait for my permit to be approved?

A: Electrical and Plumbing Permits are normally processed and approved the same day, or the following day, if received by mail. Building Permits timeframes vary according to scope of work. When a Walk-Through Permit is an option for your project, you can walk out of our office with your issued Building Permit.

Q: Do I need a Building Permit to replace my deck if I'm replacing it with the same size deck?

A: Yes.

Q: If I purchase a pre-built shed that is delivered to my property, do I need a Building Permit since I'm not really building anything?

A: If the shed is 10x15 (150 sq. ft.) or larger, a Building Permit is required. A Zoning Certificate may be required for a shed less than 150 sq. ft. if the property is within an Incorporated Town or Frederick City – contact the Town/City office.

Q: Do I need a permit for a fence?

A: If your property is not within an Incorporated Town or Frederick City, a permit for a fence is not required from the County Permits and Inspections department. If your property IS within an Incorporated Town or Frederick City, contact the municipality for their requirements.

Q: Do I need a permit for a "blow-up pool"?

A: A "blow-up (inflatable) pool" that has a 24 inch pool "wall", or depth, DOES require a building permit. Please see the website for an application submittal packet for "Swimming Pool/Hot Tub" on the "Building Permits & Zoning Certificates" page.

Q: What do I have to show on my plot plan to submit for a Building Permit?

A: 1. All property lines
2. Square Footage or Acres of Property
3. House Location w/Proposed Project
4. Setbacks
5. Property Owner Name & Address
6. Well & Septic Locations if applicable
7. Driveway Location
8. Any other Existing Structures
Contact the Permits Office at 301-600-2313; choose #4 for more specific requirements.

Q: What are setbacks?

A: Setbacks are the distances in feet from the proposed structure to the property lines in all directions. If there is a structure between the property line then the distance from the structure is used as the setback.

Q: Can I draw my own construction plans?

A: Yes, for residential projects, two sets of construction plans are required. Contact the Plan Review office by calling the 301-600-2313 and selecting #9 for further details, or refer to the Building Permit Submittal packet.

Q: Can I do my own plumbing and/or electrical work for my home project?

A: Yes, if you are the property owner who will reside at the property, you may take a "Homeowner Exam" for the type of work described in the Building Permit, and upon passing with a 70% score you may apply for the permit to do the work, with the exception of gas and water heaters.

Q: What type of plumbing work needs a plumbing permit?

A: Any new plumbing requires a plumbing permit. Any replacement appliance or fixtures that are not "like-kind" (same mechanical and electrical rating as the appliance being replaced) or if the replacement causes piping to be added or moved.

Q: What type of electrical work needs an electrical permit?

A: Any new wiring, including low voltage, service work, reintroduction of services, generators, pools/hot tubs, street lighting and illuminated signs all require electrical permits. Replacement of appliance or fixture not of the same rating needs an electrical permit.

Q: After I have scheduled an inspection, how do I know when the inspector is coming out?

A: When an inspection is scheduled through our inspection phone line, fax or e-mail, which we receive prior to 2:00 p.m., it is inspected the next business day. If the inspector is unable to keep the inspection request someone from our office will notify the person who requested the inspection by phone.

Q: How can I tell if the inspection passed or failed?

A: The inspector will leave an inspection sticker at the site. The inspector will leave a note and his phone number if you need to contact him. If no sticker is visible, you may also check an inspection status through our website: www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/permit select check permit status, current permits, enter your permit number and select check status to view inspection results.

Q: Once I receive my building permit, how long do I have to complete the work?

A: Your permit will expire one year from the date of approval unless you have made a substantial start as evidenced by the approval of the first building code inspection. Site work, Plumbing, Utility, and Electrical work are not considered to be a substantial start for the Building Permit. It is not possible to obtain an extension for a Building Permit that has not had a substantial start within one year from the date of approval. You must obtain an extension prior to expiration. In order to obtain an extension, in any case, you must request the extension in writing and pay the associated extension fee. If your permit expires, you are not eligible for a refund of all fees paid. If your permit expires, you must reapply with a complete new submittal and fees. You are responsible for keeping your Building Permit valid and requesting any necessary extensions.

Q: How do I know my project is completed by the Permits Office?

A: The end result of the permitting process is the issuance of the Certificate of Completion. The Certificate of Completion is issued when all final inspections have been approved and the construction has been approved for use. It is mailed to the applicant of the Building Permit. A Certificate of Occupancy is issued for new dwelling permits and non-residential permits.